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NEAR EAST/NORTH AFRICA REPORT

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TUNISIAN PRIME MINISTER MZALI PAYS OFFICIAL VISIT TO ALGERIA

Tunisian-Algerian Ties Strengthened

Tunis LA PRESSE DE TUNISIE in French 7 Sep 80 p 1

[Text] Mr Mohamed Mzali's official visit to Algeria will come within the framework of the two countries' present friendly, good-neighbor relations. It will contribute to strengthening the ties of unity woven between the Tunisian and Algerian people throughout their long history and more especially during their joint struggle for freedom, dignity and independence.

This visit is likewise in keeping with the Maghreb procedure in Tunisia which resolutely believes that our countries have a common destiny for which, after all, in 1958, Tunisians and Algerians paid with their blood at Saqiyat Sidi Yusuf.

United in their struggle against colonialism and by the bonds of language, religion and culture, it is our duty at all times to unite our efforts toward this Maghrebian structure which militants have been dreaming about since the very beginning and to which rising generations aspire.

If some clouds still hover over the area, we should make every effort to derive from within ourselves and from our leaders' wisdom the means to surmount the combination of difficulties and obstacles, in order to preserve undiminished the possibility of advancing toward a future founded on solidarity, understanding and complementarity.

In this respect, Prime Minister Mohamed Mzali again and again stressed that "the Maghreb is at the very heart of our concerns" and that "this economic and cultural structure, this significant potentiality, this power in which generations of patriots resolutely believe," could come about tomorrow.

The prime minister, drawing inspiration from the line which President Bourguiba and other Maghrebian leaders drew up, will focus his attention on the bilateral plan to formulate together with the Algerian authorities the principles capable of stimulating cooperation, of strengthening it and establishing it on a firm and broad basis.

On the political level, Mr Mohamed Mzali's visit to Algiers should make it possible to give new impetus to the united action between the two countries on our region's problems, on the expansion of the international situation and on the important problems which pertain to peace, progress and our people's gradual growth.

Moreover, they will, no doubt, focus attention on a careful survey of prospects for development and the diversification of exchanges between the two countries in every field. Within this context, they will not fail to stimulate to the benefit of all a strong development in trade and tourism across the Tunisian-Algerian border.

There is also reason to expect that these talks in Algiers are stressing the development of Tunisian-Algerian economic cooperation. There is a strong desire on both sides to move forward and to take advantage of the various possibilities for cooperation and complementarity in order to promote economic and socio-cultural relations between the two countries.

They have, in fact, achieved considerable success. The last one to date assumed a special importance: it concerned a gas pipeline which is to convey Algerian gas toward southern Italy on passing through Tunisian territory. It is necessary, however, to pursue the strengthening of cooperation by reactivating existing agreements on the one hand and, on the other, by extending this cooperation to other sectors.

With this in view, the next meeting in Tunis of the enlarged joint Tunisian-Algerian committee will provide the opportunity for putting into practice the directives which will be decided upon in Algiers.

In this way, it will be possible to consolidate the unity and the bonds of friendship and good neighborliness existing between the two countries and to elevate them to the level of history and our people's longings.

Tunisian-Algerian Joint Official Statement

Tunis LA PRESSE DE TUNISIE in French 10 Sep 80 p 6

[Text] The following is the Tunisian-Algerian official joint statement issued at the end of the visit to the Algerian Democratic and Popular Government of Mr Mohamed Mzali, party secretary general and prime minister: "In response to an invitation from Mr Mohamed Ben Ahmed Abdelghani, a member of the National Liberation Front (FLN) Central Committee and prime minister of the Democratic and Popular Republic of Algeria, Mr Mohamed Mzali, secretary general of the Destourien Socialist Party and prime minister of the Republic of Tunisia, has led an important delegation on an official visit to Algeria from 7 to 9 September 1980.

During his stay, Mr Mohamed Mzali was the guest of his excellency, President Cheli Bendjedid, FLN secretary general and president of the Democratic and

Popular Republic of Algeria, to whom he conveyed a message of friendship and fraternal relations from his fellowman, the eminent combatant, His Excellency, President Habib Bourgiba, president of the Tunisian Republic, and expressed the sentiments of good will and regard which the Tunisian people pledge to their fellow Algerian people.

This visit is in keeping with the general pattern of brotherly encounters and joint meetings engaged in between these two countries as also the fusing of the historical bonds which unite them. It moreover strengthens the relations of brotherhood, of friendship and union in the struggle in which they have joined side by side to defend the rights of the people of Arabian Maghreb and the Arabian nation and to protect the dignity of our people and actualize their longings for freedom and progress.

This visit also ties in with honoring the treaty of brotherhood and good neighborliness signed in Tunis on 5 January 1970.

In a friendly and open ambiance, Mr Mohamed Mzali engaged in talks with Mr Mohamed Ben Ahmed Abdelghani. Participating in them on the Algerian side were Messrs:

- Mohamed Ben Yahia, minister of foreign affairs;
- Haj Yaala, minister of finances;
- Oued Kablia, Ministry of the Interior secretary general;
- Mohamed Al Yassine, minister of heavy industry;
- Abdelaziz Khelaf, minister of commerce;
- Salah Dambri, Ministry of Foreign Affairs secretary general;
- Ali Kefi, Algerian ambassador in Tunis;
- Ahmed Bagheli, director of the Arab World Division at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
- Youssef Gherajeb, director of consular affairs;
- Maameri, general manager to the prime minister;
- Abdelmojid Bouzbid, assistant general manager at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
- Touati Belgacem, director of the Maghreb division at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs;

And on the Tunisian side Messrs:

- Hassan Belkhaja, minister of foreign affairs;
- Driss Guiga, minister of the interior;
- Mongi Kooli, deputy minister to the prime minister and leader of the Destourien Socialist Party;
- Abdelaziz Losram, minister of national economy;
- Amore Fezzoni, Tunisian ambassador in Algiers;
- Abdelkerim Moussa, adviser to the prime minister;
- Mohamed Amamou, director of political affairs for the Arab World at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
- Hedi Grioui, mission assistant on the prime minister's departmental staff;

--Ridha Ben Slama, mission assistant on the prime minister's departmental staff;
--Mondher Zneidi, mission assistant for the Ministry of National Economy;
--Khaled Ben Ammar, PDG [expansion unknown] of the Tunisian Company Construction Materials Industries (SOTIMACO).

The talks dealt with various aspects of bilateral relations and the means of strengthening them, with developments in the situation in the area, in the Arab World and in Africa as also with the international situation. The two Parties held the same opinions regarding the main questions studied.

Revitalize the Agreements and Treaties Made Between the Two Countries

On the bilateral level, the two parties, fully aware of the stability of the relations which unite the two friendly countries and which are deeply rooted in history and strengthened by religion, civilization and the joint struggle for supreme authority, dignity and progress, expressed their determination to strengthen their relations and once again affirmed their two countries' unshakeable desire to reinforce them. With this political objective in mind, the two parties stressed the need to release the news of their cooperation in order to respond to the two peoples' longings. They agreed to exchange visits by turns at the prime minister's level every 6 months. The first meeting will be held 8 February 1981 on the occasion of the commemoration of the Saqiyat Sidi Yusuf events when the friendly Algerian and Tunisian people mingled their blood and bore witness to their sacrifices and to their joint struggle and common destiny.

They also agreed to reactivate the Algerian-Tunisian joint committee and to convene at a meeting in Tunis on 13 and 14 October 1980. They also resolved to give new momentum to the treaties and agreements concluded between the two countries.

The two delegations, moreover, highlighted the need to increase contacts and the exchange of visits and delegations at all levels.

Appeal to All Arab Countries to Strengthen Palestinian Opposition

The two countries, fully aware of the pressing need to continue their joint action for building up the Greater Arab Maghreb on the foundation of brotherhood, unity, complementarity and joint interests, expressed the hope that the wise men meeting at present in Freetown will succeed in arriving at a lasting and peaceful solution to the "Western Saharan Affair."

The two delegations, on surveying the Middle-East situation, reaffirmed their adherence to the Baghdad and Tunis summit-meeting decisions and their firm resolve to lend their full support to the Palestinian people's struggle under the leadership of their sole and rightful representative, the Palestinian Liberation Organization [PLO] for the recovery of their lands and the restoration of the rights of which they were despoiled, to promote the establishment

of an independent Palestinian state and the pursuit of the movement for the withdrawal of Zionists from all occupied Arab territories including the Holy City of El Qods.

They likewise again affirmed that the separate agreement entered into with the Zionist enemy constitutes a rupture in the creation of Arab unity and a blow aimed at the Arab nation's struggle insofar as it sanctions the Zionist imperialist settlement and causes considerable harm to the Palestinian cause, to the Palestinian people's sacrifices and to their longings for freedom, dignity and sovereignty.

On this subject, the two parties are addressing an appeal to all Arab countries to muster every possible force in order to strengthen the Palestinian Resistance and the front-line countries to prevent the Zionist enemy from making El Qods its capital. The two countries are making an appeal to the international conscience and to all forces longing for peace to bar the way to the realization of Zionist designs.

The two parties emphasized the importance of supporting the Lebanese government in order to thwart the Zionist struggle to destroy Lebanese unity and strike a blow at their sovereignty.

On the other hand, the two parties stressed their interest in making the Mediterranean a haven of peace and security and expressed their concern to make every effort to eliminate every hotbed of tension in this vital area and to set up there new bases of a fruitful and sincere cooperation in the service of world peace and security.

Zeal for the Non-Aligned Movement

On the African level, the two parties restated their support for the peoples of Namibia and South Africa's struggle for freedom, independence and dignity.

They addressed an appeal to the international conscience to oppose the apartheid policy and colonial domination which the white minority imposed in South Africa on the Namibian people.

The two parties, moreover, denounced the continual unprovoked assaults which the Pretorian racist government has inflicted on bordering African countries.

The two countries highlighted the importance of unity and cooperation between the African and Arab countries because of the historical bonds which unite them and their joint struggle against a common enemy and because of the joint longing for a better future relieved of every form of domination and exploitation.

The two countries again affirmed their dedication to the Non-Alignment Movement and their determination to cooperate closely to safeguard this movement, its principles, its unity, and to strengthen its non-alignment based on the

conviction that it is a significant factor in solving the problems which confront the international community, by contributing effectively to the strengthening of world peace and in this manner enhancing its prestige and its part in initiating a new more just and more equitable world-wide economic order.

The two parties likewise highlighted the important part which the Non-aligned Movement played in the United Nations and in the group of the 77 in order to establish new political and economic relations between the industrialized and developing countries.

The two parties paid special attention to the international economic crisis and stressed the need to unite every effort to replace the present economic system with a new worldwide economic system built on the foundation of justice and equality among all nations.

The two parties expressed their contentment regarding the positive results achieved during this visit and stressed the importance of continuing these meetings between the two countries on every level.

Mr Mohamed Mzali, PSD secretary general and prime minister of the Tunisian Republic expressed his admiration and high esteem for what Algeria has accomplished in its promotion of progress and prosperity. He also thanked Mr Mohamed Ben Ahmed Abdelghani, a member of the FLN Central Committee and prime minister of the Democratic and Popular Republic of Algeria, and also the Algerian people for their warm welcome and hospitality given to the Tunisian delegation.

Mr Mohamed Mzali also extended to his counterpart, Mr Mohamed Ben Ahmed Abdelghani, an invitation to visit Tunisia which the latter graciously accepted. This visit, set for 8 February 1981, will take place at Saqiyat Sidi Yusuf.

Major Joint Committee To Meet

Tunis LA PRESSE DE TUNISIE in French 9 Sep 80 p 4

[Text] It has come to our attention that the Tunisian-Algerian working session held yesterday morning at the government palace in Algiers and chaired by the Algerian and Tunisian prime ministers, Messrs Mohamed Ben Ahmed Abdelghani and Mohamed Mzali, was outstanding for its frankness and the convergence of viewpoints in all the questions with which they dealt.

The talks, which lasted about an hour and 45 minutes, took place in a friendly and optimistic atmosphere permeated with a spirit of fruitful cooperation. They touched particularly on questions related to strengthening cooperation between the two countries in the areas of secondary and higher education and the exchange of teachers to provide for Algerian needs in trained teaching personnel.

The two parties again affirmed the importance of a bilateral cooperation and coordination in matters of scientific research. They also took advantage of the occasion to revise the agreement draft relating to the areas of commercial exchanges between the two countries with the intent of promoting economic relations between the two countries.

During this meeting, the two parties expressed the wish to pursue the dialogue and the discussions between the two countries. That is why they decided to set up an exchange of visits at the prime minister level to take place every 6 months and to maintain a permanent exchange of ideas at the minister of foreign affairs level.

The parties also resolved to convene the Tunisian-Algerian Greater Joint Committee around mid-October. This meeting is to be preceded by sectorial meetings.

Mr Mzali's Press Statement

Tunis LA PRESSE DE TUNISIE in French 9 Sep 80 p 4

[Text] Mr Mohamed Mzali, prime minister and Party secretary general, arrived in Algiers Sunday evening for an official 3-day visit.

Aboard the chartered Tunis-Air Plane were the prime minister and members of the official Tunisian delegation, among whom were in particular Messrs Hassan Beikhoja, minister of foreign affairs, Driss Guiga, minister of the interior, Mongi Kooli, deputy minister to the prime minister and Party leader, and Abdelaziz Lasram, minister of national economy. The plane landed in Algiers at the International Houari Boumediene airport at 1750 hours.

Mr Mohamed Mzali was greeted at the passenger steps by Mr Ahmed Abdelghani, Algerian prime minister and FLN Central Committee members, surrounded by government members as also by Mr Amor Fezzani, Tunisian ambassador in Algiers.

Accompanied by his Algerian counterpart, Mr Mohamed Mzali first of all saluted the flag while the band struck up the national anthem of both countries.

The prime minister then reviewed a detachment of troops of the republic infantry which paid him their respects. He then greeted the various personages who had come to welcome him, among whom were Algerian high-commissioned officers, members of the Algerian and African diplomatic corps, Tunisian embassy officials and representatives of the Tunisian colony in Algiers.

At the request of the Algerian and international press, Mr Mzali made the following statement:

"Today I am making my first official visit to Algeria as prime minister of the Tunisian Government. That I am making this visit to Algeria at the

invitation of our brother, Mohamed Ben Ahmed Abdelghani, and heading an important delegation made up of government members and high officials, bears witness to the strengthening of the brotherly bonds between our two countries, bonds which date from both ancient and modern history, and to the common struggle in which we both have been engaged together to free our countries from colonialism. This visit also testifies to our renewed determination to build up our common future just as in the past we have won our independence. I would like to take advantage of this occasion to extend to President Chadli Bendjedid the greetings and the token of the highest esteem from his fellow combatant, President Habib Bourguiba. In my name and in that of my colleagues, I also extend to my esteemed colleague, Mr Mohamed Ben Ahmed Abdelghani, and to the Algerian people, our sincere sentiments of warm friendship and our best wishes for a glowing future for our two peoples and the entire Arab Greater Maghrib."

On the other hand, in response to a question asked by a representative of an international press agency regarding the possibility of Tunisia playing a mediation role in the Western Saharan conflict, Mr Mohamed Mzali stressed that Tunisia is ready to take any initiative insofar as the interested parties call on him for his assistance. He expressed the hope that all Arab Greater Maghrib problems would be resolved within a Maghrib framework.

Mr Mohamed Mzali left Tunis Sunday afternoon for Algiers. On this visit he was accompanied by an important delegation including Messrs Hassan Belkhoja, minister of foreign affairs, Driss Guiga, minister of the interior, Mongi Keuli, minister delegate attached to the prime minister's department and PSD leader, Abdelaziz Lassaad, minister of national economy, Amor Fezzani, Tunisian ambassador in Algiers, Mohamed Amamou, manager of political affairs for the Arab World at the Ministry of the A.E., Abdelkrim Moussa, special adviser to the prime minister, Hedi Grioui, delegation assistant at the prime minister's office, Ridha Ben Slama, delegation assistant at the prime minister's office, Mondher Znaidi, delegation assistant at the Ministry of National Economy, Khaled Ben Ammar, PDC [expansion unknown] of SOTIMACO (Tunisian Industrial Company for Construction Materials), Col Abdelkader Ammar, aide-de-camp and Mr Naceur Tebessi, deputy director of protocol.

Shortly before his departure, the prime minister made the following statement to the press:

"I am delighted to respond to the gracious invitation of my colleague and friend, Mr Mohamed Ben Ahmed Abdelghani, Algerian prime minister, to pay an official visit to nearby Algeria and to get in touch with Algerian authorities in order to strengthen the fraternal cooperation existing between the two countries. I take great pleasure on this occasion in conveying to His Excellency, President Chadli Bendjedid, the greetings of our eminent leader, President Habib Bourguiba, and to make known to the government and the Algerian people the brotherly sentiments of regard and friendship which all Tunisians devote to their Algerian brothers."

On his departure from the Tunis-Carthage International Airport, the prime minister was bid farewell by Dr Sadok Mokaddem, chairman of the National Assembly, the members of the government and the Policy Bureau, some high party and administration officials, as also by Mr Mohamed Taoufik Kera Turki, Algerian charge d'affaires and the members of the Algerian embassy in Tunis.

BRIEFS

MAURITANIA-ALGERIA COOPERATION TALKS--The president of the Military Committee of National Salvation (CMSN), head of state and government, returned to the capital late yesterday afternoon from Algiers at the end of an official visit to Algeria at the invitation of President Chadli Bendjedid. On his arrival at the VIP lounge of the airport, the head of state declared that his visit to Algeria gave him the opportunity to hold talks with His Excellency President Chadli Bendjedid on regional, Arab, African and international issues. Bilateral cooperation and means to develop it were at the center of these talks. He said he was very satisfied with this country and the climate of brotherhood and mutual comprehension which prevailed throughout the period of his visit. The talks were fruitful and the results positive. The Algeria-Mauritanian cooperation has been strengthened by the visit. I think, he added, that this visit will have a positive impact on the countries of the Maghreb and on Arab-African cooperation. [Text] [AB021503 Nouakchott Domestic Service in French 0700 GMT 2 Oct 80]

IRAQI DEMONSTRATION IN MAURITANIA--The Iraqi community in Nouakchott yesterday afternoon organized a support march in favor of their head of state, President Saddam Husayn, on the occasion of the conflict between Iraq and Iran. The march, which started at the (Larabi) school, headed towards the Iraqi Embassy after passing through the principal streets of the capital. One could read on their placards such slogans as: [word indistinct] Arabistan for Arabs; All behind Iraq for the repeal of the 6 March accord; Manage Arab sovereignty in a [word indistinct] constitutes treason against the whole Arab nation. [Excerpt] [AB011637 Nouakchott Domestic Service in French 0700 GMT 1 Oct 80]

CSG: 4400

PARTY MILITANTS HEAR SPECIAL CONGRESS' RECOMMENDATIONS

Algiers EL MOUDJAHID in French 22-23 Aug 80 p 2

[Text] The revival of Party activities was the purpose of a working session held last Wednesday at the Bougaa daïra headquarters and which brought together members from the kaunas offices of the council executives and authorities from public organizations from the Bougaa, Bousselen, Tal Ifacene and Guenzet districts.

During this working session, chaired by Mr Abdesselam Belattar, national representative of the Setif Party, they emphasized the recommendations of the Party's extraordinary congress and in particular, the role of the Party's fighting wing in the district's economic, social and cultural development. Moreover, during the same meeting, they also discussed projects pertaining to the coming 80-85 5-year plan, those from the last development program which still remain to be completed, and each district's economic, social and cultural problems.

In the balance sheets submitted, it is evident that such problems as housing, the supply of drinking water are still a matter of deep concern for all the daïras and in particular for the Bougaa district whose citizens for more than 2 months now are being supplied by tank trucks.

In addition, the committee members are focusing their attention on the Bougaa farming village where the work has been abandoned and left in ruins for more than a year.

Finally, let us point out that similar meetings have taken place or will take place at the level of each daïra county seat in the Setif wilaya.

RR70

CSO: 4400

SOCIOECONOMIC ACTIVITIES EMPHASIZED AT PARTY GRASSROOTS LEVEL

Algiers EL MOUDJAHID in French 22-23 Aug 80 p 1

[Text] Recently, in accordance with recommendations from the FLN Extraordinary Congress, meetings and working sessions are being held at the level of different national territorial regions. This revival of party activities, which has been noted for some time, makes it possible particularly for authorities, locally elected candidates and citizens to discuss several questions of the moment. Some questions as different as housing, improvement of sanitation or other social problems still at times sharply arise in some areas. The meetings, which are held with this purpose in view, in their endeavor to get to the heart of the questions, clearly make it possible to seek the best possible solutions.

In Algiers, Mr Labidi Bartal, the party's associate national representative of the Algiers wilaya, Thursday morning chaired a meeting of coordinators from the Party's federations and kasmas and secretary generals from territorial and council associations and the UGTA [General Union of Algerian Workers] wilaya, in the presence of Messrs Ahmed Sebaa and Ali Lasfar, Central Committee members and respectively, department president of the grass-root organizations in the Party and UGTA national secretary.

During this meeting, which is within the framework of a series of meetings the Party's national department in the Algiers wilaya is holding, they discussed reports on problems raised at the level of economic undertakings and for which some suitable solutions have been submitted.

In the course of his address, Mr Labidi stressed the importance of avoiding the lack of clarity which prevails in some economic sectors, of striving harder and more earnestly than ever, to keep an eye on the observance of the laws made by the policy board and the need for the workers to take part in the quest for solutions to the problems they encounter.

He concluded by urging the authorities to give good example to the workers, and to assume fully their responsibilities.

Then taking the floor, Mr Ahmed Sebaa in his turn invited the participants in the meeting to redouble their efforts and to take every measure necessary

to put an end to all the difficulties which the workers encounter in carrying out their assignment and then went on to say that those in authority should fulfill their obligations in order to win the workers' confidence in the struggle for production and productivity.

We recall that a very similar meeting took place last Monday. It was devoted to the study of the transport situation in the capital and more particularly to that supplied by the RSTA [expansion unknown].

Within the next few weeks, similar meetings will be set up at the level of Syndical and ATU [Algerian Trade Union] sections of the economic units established in the Algerian wilaya in order to study the problems inherent in the distribution section with the view to solving them as soon as possible.

8870

CSO: 4400

BRIEFS

COMMISSIONS TO STUDY 5-YEAR PLAN--On Monday 25 August at 1500 hrs, the People's National Assembly standing committees will begin the study of the text of the bills which the People's National Assembly board has referred to them. Starting on this date, they will undertake the study of several bills, especially the appropriations bill for 1981 and the bills respecting the 1980-84 5-year plan. [Text] [Algiers EL MOUDJAHID in French 20 Aug 80 p 1] 8870

WALIS, DAIRA HEADS MEET MINISTER--Dr Boualem Benhamouda, a member of the policy committee and minister of the interior, yesterday met with the new Walis and Daira heads at his ministerial department headquarters, before their return to their posts. On this occasion, the minister recalled the main lines given by the president of the republic and the party's secretary general, who had insisted that on applying the law, government officials, while always taking general interests into account, should act in accordance with the spirit and the text of the charter, the resolutions of the party's first extraordinary congress and the Central Committee's resolutions. They should work to fulfill the needs of the general public while always maintaining a behavior worthy of their mission and of the trust placed in them. The minister asked the new Walis and Daira heads to act in such a manner that the movement undertaken in no way affects the carrying out of the programs underway and the detailed build up of the 5-year plan. [Text] [Algiers EL MOUDJAHID in French 20 Aug 80 p 1] 8870

CSO: 4400

BRIEFS

NEW HEALTH CENTER--On 30 August 1980, Crown Prince and Minister of Defense Shaykh Hasan ibn 'Isa Al Khalifah opened the Sitrah Health Center, which contains treatment rooms, a pharmacy, a lecture hall, a maternity ward, two dental clinics, and an X-ray clinic. The center will start with a staff of about 50, including four doctors. [Excerpts] [Manama AL-MAWAQIF in Arabic 1 Sep 80 p 5]

CSO: 4802

HOUSE USED AS PLOTTERS MEETING PLACE RAIDED BY REVOLUTION GUARDS

Tehran ETTELA'AT in Persian 17 Aug 80 pp 1-2

[Text] A plot network having armed underground activities against the Islamic Republic of Iran was discovered in Tehran and members of it arrested.

A Central Komiteh strike group discovered a "team" house during the past several days which was connected with the "Kumeleh" and Peykar [Struggle to Free the Working Class] groups which had secret activities in Tehran against the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran. A number of this network's members were arrested in this connection.

In the examination which the Guards made of the house, a large number of important documents and papers in connection with overthrowing the Islamic Republic of Iran, initiating revolt in the country, the Gonbad, Kordestan and Gorgan incidents, and furthermore announcements of the Feda'i-ye Khalq guerillas, were discovered and seized.

At the same time, a number of books of official documents with forged stamps, forged army discharge cards, several forged pass-cards of the Komiteh, and a number of documents for the training and preparation of persons for domestic sabotage were acquired.

A spokesman for the Central Komiteh, while announcing this news, stated in an interview with our correspondent that: A while ago we were informed of suspicious comings and goings from a house situated near Amirabad Street. Upon receipt of this information, the Guards immediately placed the aforementioned house under surveillance. After a period of surveillance they realized that activities against the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran were taking place in that house. They also realized that most of those persons entering and leaving the house were youths, who entered the house with empty hands and left carrying a package. Finally, after the requisite surveillance and on order of the prosecutor, the Guards entered the house, and arrested about six persons there.

The spokesman added: Following interrogation of those arrested it became clear that a sabotage network had been organized in that house, and that they had coordinated their program of activities with the Kumeleh Party and Peykar. These persons confessed in their interrogations that they had held political activities in the house. Of course it became clear that their activities had been against the Islamic Republic of Iran, aimed at creating fear, terror and unrest in the country. Following investigation it became obvious that these persons had organized a "team" house, that they drew unaware and deluded youths to the house, furnished them with weapons, and trained them in their use. Simultaneously the members of this network brainwashed these unaware and deluded youths with provocative words, and used the weak points of these youths to incite them against the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran. At the end of the training course, these youths were given missions by the network's members to create disorder, fear and terror in the city. The spokesman added: Simultaneously a number of important documents and papers connected with the Kordestan and Gonbad incidents were acquired in this network's hideout. Following examination it became evident that this network's members had sent a number of armed persons to those war zones in order to aid counterrevolutionaries in their struggle against the Guards and the army. Meanwhile these members had infiltrated the factories in order to incite the workers, and had engaged in spreading poisonous lies to do so.

This spokesman added: Charges against the members of this network include: Creating strikes and distributing illegal bulletins in factories; recording names and addresses of workers and youths in order to delude them; organizing a "team" house for counterrevolutionary and illegal activities in connection with the "Kumeleh" and "Peykar" parties; procuring weapons, training and preparing armed persons for missions in the western regions and inside cities; interference in the Gonbad events, and trips to Kordestan and Gorgan in the thick of battle; making counterfeit stamps for books of official documents, and forged military service discharge papers; theft of Komiteh pass cards; sending persons to factories, and infiltrating workers councils for purposes of sabotage and interruption of production; preparing motion picture equipment; printing and xeroxing for counterrevolutionary activities.

The spokesman said in closing: During the first nights of the Guards' surveillance of this team house, they were suddenly fired upon by an armed group during the early morning hours.

9597
CSO: 4906

MINISTER OF ROADS EXPLAINS NEW CONSTRUCTION PROGRAMS

Tehran SOBH-E AZADEGAN in Persian 4 Sep 80 p 4

[Interview With Musavi Kalantari]

[Text] AZADEGAN: It is hoped that promises and pledges are turned into action and become a reality, and the oppressed and poor members of the society, who had previously heard so many promises from officials of the former regime and its mercenary criminal ministers, could, by the grace of God, witness the realization of their hopes and desires, during the rule of the revolutionary government of Prime Minister Raja'i.

With that in mind, we asked Mr Kalantari to explain, for the benefit of our readers, his ministry's new plans and programs.

[Question] What are your overall plans in the new government?

[Answer] In order to explain our plans and projects, we must first try to understand what the ministry is. The Ministry of Roads is composed of many departments, each as big as a ministry itself. They include the Department of Civil Aviation, The State Railways, Ports Organization, Meteorological Department and Soil Laboratories Department. In the next government we will continue carrying out the projects already started and we hope that we will not have to spend so much time in the future to make them [other government agencies] cooperate with us. We will, instead, concentrate all our energies on our work. One of our major problems in the past was fighting against counterrevolutionary elements who, sometimes, were able to prevent our efforts by closing our workshops through agitation. Sometimes they were even able to deceive revolutionary forces in their confrontation with us. It was then that we were able to realize that they were trying to fish in troubled waters. We feel that we are not going to have the same problems in the next government and will be able to get busy with our job. Our main problem is that of working with the Plan Organization and the Ministry of Finance. This, I had often said in the past. Our next problem will be the counterrevolutionaries. In the future our efforts will be directed towards making our projects people-oriented, especially projects such as Sarakhs-Mashhad railway which needed a "sondage" [drilling] at the cost of 18 million tumans, that we no longer want to spend.

"Sondage" is the testing well that is dug from the top of a mountain to where a tunnel is to pass. This is to test the soil. It was suggested by the Soviets, and when we asked them if they used the same method in the Soviet Union, they said no, because it was costly. During the old regime there had been extravagances such as this, the beneficiaries of which had been mostly Americans, Japanese, French and Italians.

1. Next we will clean our working conditions, a major part of it already is done, and we intend to use the services of young, intelligent people who are anxious to work.

2. We will try to make our provincial departments self-sufficient. In the past, everything was so centralized that if they wanted to build a road in the remotest part of the country, the project had to be approved in Tehran. There were various reasons for that. Aside from bureaucratic reasons, officials were motivated by financial gains through kickbacks. This is no longer possible in a revolutionary government. Provincial departments will be given more authority and freedom of action.

3. We will do away with unnecessary and hindering regulations, the number of which is not few. We started this last month and will continue doing it. We hope to continue the cleanup of our various departments in the next government. We also have some "practical" projects some of which I will mention here. These will be carried out provided we are given the necessary means. These include:

1. In the field of "practical" projects, our main effort will be concentrated on rural roads. We do not have enough roads in the country, and for the next 30 years if we continue to build roads and railways we will still need more roads. Highway networks will be completed, also. On our frontiers, we only have 100 kilometers of paved highway and that is located in the Moghan Plain. The rest are dirt roads, and in some areas we don't have any roads at all. This shortage of roads is more felt in an area where a war is imposed on us. We will soon pave the existing dirt roads in the border zones and build new roads where there are none.

2. We have some railway projects including the connecting of populated areas and the nation's ports by railways. If possible, we will try to link the trans-Iranian railway with that of Pakistan.

3. We plan construction of small ports in the south, designed to solve unemployment, one of the most acute problems in the country. By constructing the small ports we hope to be able to attract our youths from all over the country to fishing industry to help both eliminate unemployment and raise production (of foodstuff).

Construction of Airports In Iranshahr and Ardabil

4. Another project concerns construction of small and inexpensive airports in remote towns where road building is not possible at this time.

Take Ardabil, as an example, a fairly large town, lacking proper roads. We will build an airport there. There are also towns with roads but so remote that physicians refuse to work there, like Iranshahr. They will have airports, too.

Meanwhile, efforts will be made to improve conditions at existing airports, by rate increase, and through expanded use of electronic navigating gears.

5. Regarding the Metereological Organization, it now only serves the radio and TV news services and the airline, which is not in line with the Islamic revolutionary conditions. It must be put into more uses, such as in agriculture. We hope that this organization will become, like its counterparts in other countries, involved in research work.

6. We also have projects designed to make us independent from other countries. In the field of highway construction, we are not depending on others, as far as experts are concerned. In certain departments, such as Ports Organization and Civil Aviation Agency, a false need is felt but every effort will be made to remove that and become selfsufficient.

The Ending of Dependency

We will try not to be dependent on foreign experts. We will train the experts we need. As far as spare parts are concerned, we are badly dependent and could be put under pressure. There are plans to make some of the spare parts we need, at a lower level. In Iran, we have some of the most modern locomotives, but unfortunately we are badly dependent for spare parts.

Efforts will be made to manufacture the tools we need and not depend on colonialist powers. Soon we will be able to build some of the road building equipment and machines we need, and as far as technical experts are concerned, we are not deficient.

7. As you know, they say that unemployment is widespread. I have suggested that we will solve this problem. I have proposed that unemployed be put to work at road building projects, and if necessary, we build roads by hand. This way, we can help eliminate unemployment, and build roads at the same time.

[Question] Regarding the surfacing of the roads in western parts of the country, not much has been done and the surfacing of a road between two frontier towns had begun. Can you explain the reason?

[Answer] Four groups are working in the west. I am not trying to defend myself, because at a time when the blood of a guard is being shed, I have no right to defend myself. But I would like to say a few words about what we are accomplishing there. At this moment, there are four groups at work in the western section of the country. These groups are from Mashhad, Kermanshah and Esfahan. The latter group is made up of 44 men. The oil company does not send us the needed tar on time, even though the Minister of Oil has given

his orders. In the meantime, road surfacing is not as simple as spreading water on the road. In most parts of the country we do not even have dirt roads to cover them with asphalt. In the south, for example, there is a road between Bandar 'Abbas and Chahbahar to Jask. From there on we don't even have a dirt road. Some people claim that roads on the Iraqi border areas are surfaced. They did it 2 years ago and now have imposed a war on us.

It takes 6 months to set up an asphalt mixing plant and yet we have surfaced 40 kilometers of roads.

It must be taken into consideration that setting up an asphalt mixing plant takes as long as that of a cement plant. Six months. That is why we proceeded with surfacing the roads with cold asphalt and have, so far, surfaced some 40 kilometers of road. It is not, of course, a high quality asphalt but there was little that we could do. Had we tried to set up a rock-cracking plant for making asphalt, the winter season would have arrived, and surfacing of roads is not possible in wintertime. I understand the uncomfortable situation that our brother guards are in, but there is a limit to what we can expect. We have done the best we could and have assigned two of my deputies to the western areas and have been sent there very often. My two other deputies were sent there today, 1-/6/59 [1 Sep 80].

Antirevolution Hinders Our Development Programs

Greedy and profit-seeking contractors are not accepting contract works in that area. We are, therefore, building the roads with our own facilities and the help of devoted individuals. Recently, all our equipment were destroyed by RPG's [Rifle propelled grenade] and our graders and trucks have struck land mines.

[Question] Why the Ministry of Roads is not executing major projects such as the electrification of the north-south railways, and why the completion of the Tehran-Esfahan highway has been postponed. Why is it that the Ministry of Roads has turned into a repairing instrument of the highways?

[Answer] We are opposed to some of these projects because we consider them as being more of a luxury, like the ones you mentioned.

9561

CSO: 4906

BOUCETTA REVIEWS EFFORTS TO INITIATE TALKS WITH ALGERIA

Casablanca MAROC SOIR in French 13 Aug 80 p 2

[Text] Morocco is "ready to welcome any initiative which would contribute to a convergence of the points of view (between Morocco and Algeria) in the western Sahara conflict," affirmed Mr Mohamed Boucetta, Moroccan minister of foreign affairs.

In an interview published Tuesday by the Paris Arabic-language daily AN NAHER ARABE ET INTERNATIONAL, Mr Boucetta says that "his country, having always been anxious to put an end to the tension which prevails in the region, has never refused the missions of good offices which have been proposed to it."

"Thus," he added, "there was a first attempt on the part of President Bourguiba, which was followed by several Saudi attempts. Finally there was the visit of the Tunisian minister Mr Mzali, whom we briefed on the situation." "But," stressed Mr Boucetta, "none of these initiatives proposed to us constituted real mediations. At the most they were a search for a path to open a dialog," he said.

Concerning the relations of his country with Algeria, the chief Moroccan diplomat emphasized that he had not noted any "significant change" and affirmed that his country would not miss any opportunity to encourage economic development and cooperation with all the countries of the region."

6108

CSU: 4400

PEACE IN SAHARA SEEN DEPENDING ON ALGERIA

Casablanca MAROC SOIR in French 13-14 Sep 80 pp 1, 2

[Excerpts] We have already explained the reasons for the presence of Morocco at Freetown during the meeting of the ad hoc committee of the Organization of African Unity (OAU). This was a decision that was reached by His Excellency Hassan the Second after considerable deliberation for the purpose of informing and convincing, in order to reaffirm our rights by once again presenting all of our historical, juridical, political and humane arguments and our determination to retain what belongs to us, since the Sahara is our home.

Indeed, our presence in Freetown has proved to be positive. In spite of the serious offense committed by the Committee in inviting mercenaries, we are right in expressing satisfaction with the conduct of the debates which were generally honest and correct. Algeria and the mercenaries expected to convert this meeting into a platform for presenting their propaganda, for accusing Morocco and for setting up a tribunal. However, by consenting to the request of Morocco to hold closed meetings, the Committee has permitted peaceful, and even serious, conducting of debates. Furthermore, we have strong arguments and do not need to employ propaganda whereas in the case of our opponents, exactly the opposite is true.

Finally, the mercenaries have not benefited from the privileged status on which they were counting. They have been considered as just another organization.

Everyone was able to notice that these Saharans had come from within the Saharan provinces and that the mercenaries had come from Algeria. It was also an easy matter to demonstrate that the spokesmen for the mercenaries were mostly Mauritanian opponents who had nothing to do with the Sahara and that the few Moroccans present in the movement such as El Ouali, who was killed before Nouakchott, were subversive leftists.

In fact, the Committee proposed that the Saharan people be requested to choose between Morocco and Independence. However, the choice had already been made.

If the Sages had been really wise, they would have drawn from the impressive demonstration of the real representatives of the Saharan people the conclusion that was obvious, that is, that the Polisario has no right to representation and that the people expressed their decision unequivocally, particularly during the elections which were held in the Saharan provinces, these elections after all being perfectly free ones where the people voted in mass and which permitted all of the political factions to be represented in the assemblies.

Finally, it can be seen that the recommendation adopted by the ad hoc committee has presented no new ideas, that it is speaking in generalities and that actually it is simply expressing a pious wish. However, there is a positive aspect to its presentation in that it makes no reference to the so-called Polisario, which is a step in the right direction.

Consequently, we were right in making the trip to Freetown which furnished us with a new opportunity to present the real problem. The present conflict is not taking place within the Saharan provinces themselves but along the borders. Therefore, we are witnessing an international conflict and not an internal one as Algeria would have the world believe. This is why a referendum is not necessary.

The only solution consists in the conducting of negotiations between the two conflicting parties, namely, Morocco and Algeria. Consequently, reestablishment of peace in this region depends on Algeria and on Algeria alone.

7619
CSO: 4400

MOZAMBICAN RECOGNITION OF POLISARIO CONDEMNED

Rabat L'OPINION in French 31 Aug 80 p 1

[Article by Fatima Belarbi]

[Text] Mozambique and the mercenaries of Algiers have decided to establish diplomatic relations...at the ambassadorial level.

One wonders whether the Mozambican officials took the trouble to send a scout into the region were it only to inform themselves as to the geographic limits of the phantom "SDAR" [Saharan Democratic Arab Republic] and as to the site for the new Mozambican embassy...at least for the sake of the security of the new Mozambican ambassador.

Too preoccupied with slogans which no longer mean anything, and with so-called principles which have no foundation, neither juridical, nor historic, nor even humanitarian, the Mozambican leaders make decisions lightly, without concerning themselves over the future of either African peoples or of the African continent.

Mr Samora Machel, as onetime leader of the liberation movement (FRELIMO), should know that such a movement does not grow up in a day, and that at the time when Africa was struggling for its independence, what is today called the POLISARIO existed neither in spirit nor in letter.

Mr Machel had never heard of POLISARIO before a certain date. Does not Mr Machel, who is well known in Rabat, and who also is familiar enough with Morocco to have come here several times to ask its aid, realize that the Moroccan people have claimed these Saharan provinces for decades? In 1972, at the time of the OAU summit in Rabat, which Mr Machel attended, did he hear a single African leader speak of the "POLISARIO"?

Some people have very short memories. But the [line dropped] remember, and the Moroccan people themselves have not forgotten, the support and aid they gave to FRELIMO for the independence of Mozambique, and they recall sadly the "gratitude" of a man who could show himself "worthy" of that support, who postures today as an enemy of the Moroccan cause.

However much Mr Machel may commit in new expenses for "his new embassy" in Algiers, the Moroccan people will not be dissuaded from continuing their fight for the integrity of their country.

We only hope that the new ambassador--if, after all, he is ever named--will not someday be ranked with the mercenaries of Algiers and presented to the press as such.

9516

CSO: 4400

KING ANNOUNCES RENT REDUCTION, HOUSING CONSTRUCTION INCENTIVES

Details of Speech

Casablanca MAROC SOIR in French 21 Aug 80 p 1

[Text] Casablanca 21 August (MAP)--His Majesty Hassan II gave a speech yesterday evening at the royal palace of Casablanca commemorating the 27th anniversary of the Revolution of the King and the People.

The speech, which began at 21 hours GMT lasted 40 minutes and focused on three main points, the reduction of rent for wage-earners whose income does not exceed 1500 dirhams, exemption from taxation for 15 years for all those who build houses, and the appeal to the interested agencies to hold national education days.

His Majesty the King, who was surrounded by their Royal Highnesses Crown Prince Sidi Mohammed and Prince Moulay Rachid, gave the speech commemorating the 20th of August 1953 in the presence of the members of the government, headed by the Prime Minister and Minister of Justice Maitre Maati Bouabid, the president of the Chamber of Deputies, Mr Day Ould Sidi Baba, the advisers of his majesty the king, senior officers of the general staff of the Royal Armed Forces, the king's procurator with the Supreme Court, the high commissioner for former resistance fighters, former members of the liberation army and members of the provisional council of former resistance fighters and former members of the Liberation Army.

The sovereign made an historical reference to this crucial period of our national history marked by two important dates: that of the sacrifice of 20 August 1953, and that of the return of the liberator of the nation in November 1955 who on this occasion announced the end of the protectorate and of colonialism and the beginning of that of liberty and independence. During this speech his majesty the king developed three main ideas inspired directly by the historic comment of His Majesty Mohammed V, who had said at the time that we had emerged from the little holy war to embark on the great holy war. Far-seeing and pragmatic, His Majesty Hassan II, who lives in harmony with his people, made three important decisions. Employees whose wages do not exceed 1500 DH will have the right to a reduction of a

third of their total rent. And in order not to injure those who are building or who want to build for personal use, a tax exemption is granted for 15 years.

"Thus we will have increased the activity in this sector," said his majesty the king, "the state will have more housing units built by it to put at the disposal of the citizens, for even if it undertakes to build with all its might, it will not succeed in meeting the needs of the population between now and the year 2000; we will also have relieved the consumer, created jobs, increased exchanges, and lightened the burden on the compensation fund."

With regard to the problem of national education, His Majesty Hassan II decided to call upon the representatives of political, trade union, and student organizations, parents of school-children, high officials, members of the parliamentary commission and various other interested sectors to debate this question between now and the end of the month under his chairmanship.

"Whether it takes 10 days or a month, these education days should result in solutions which satisfy everyone," said the sovereign, "and if we find a program, a path for all, this will calm the concern of our children for their future and save them from doubt and uncertainty."

Finally his majesty the king made homage to the Martyrs, headed by the father of the Nation, His Deceased Majesty Mohammed V, and to the chauhada "who are daily falling on the field of honor in the Sahara, for the defense of the territorial integrity of the fatherland."

Ahmed Alaoui Comment

Casablanca MAROC SOIR in French 28 Aug 80 pp 1, 2

[Text] In the speech which he gave last August 20, His Majesty Hassan II announced that new residential houses would be exempt from all taxation for 15 years.

This step completes the decisions made with regard to rents and is designed substantially to encourage real estate investments. Certain promoters might actually consider, in the light of measures taken in favor of economically disadvantaged renters, that interest in construction would decline, or even disappear altogether.

In order to dispel this fear and to encourage developers in a valid way, his majesty the king took these steps of tax exemption, which will have important consequences for economic and social plans.

At present, actually, the total deficit is a million housing units. Between now and the end of the century there will be 20 million more Moroccans who will need 4 million housing units.

We must therefore build, in 20 years, 5 million housing units if we wish to assure each citizen decent and dignified housing conditions. These figures explain the present situation, in which the demand is well above the supply, as the Sovereign explained so clearly: "In the present state of affairs, the heavy demand on the one hand, and the inadequate supply on the other, has brought about an imbalance to the point that the law of supply and demand, applied purely, necessarily causes voracious leases."

This situation has been aggravated as a result of the changes which are occurring in Moroccan society whereby the young married couples wish to live independently and not at the side of their parents. The present shortage therefore causes economic, social, and in the final analysis also political problems.

Hence the importance of the measures applied by His Majesty Hassan II for, if one wants people to build, they must be encouraged to do so, and the best means in this field, as in all others, is tax exemption. Thus the period of 15 years which has been established is long enough to permit the amortization of the construction. The step taken on behalf of the developers seems therefore to be quite exceptional because the situation itself is exceptional. It is a question of responding to a social and moral need; one could even say a primordial need.

Furthermore this measure will have very positive results on the economic level. The strongly stimulative effect of construction is well known; all are aware how it creates jobs and activity both directly and indirectly. In order to achieve the established goals, 250,000 housing units actually have to be built henceforth per year: one can thus judge the extraordinary development of many activities from the cement plants to the carpentry shops.

And one knows that the best taxpayer is prosperity in the end. Thanks to the surge of all the direct and indirect activities of construction, taxation will find new resources.

But people will ask whether it is possible to build 250,000 housing units per year. As elsewhere, this is a question of political will. The state, for example, is perfectly capable of building in 20 years a million housing units for its officials, or 5 million people, a quarter of the total requirement.

Industrial enterprises and quasi-state services, thanks to the concessions granted to them both on the financial and on the tax level, will also be able to build as many housing units.

Only three million housing units would remain to be built. This task, let us emphasize in passing, will be facilitated by the new policy on rural housing. The Minister of Housing and Development of the Territory, Mr Abbes El Fassi, will start the construction of 180 pilot villages during the next plan. These will constitute magnets of urbanization in the zones where

housing at the present time is scattered. This policy will make it possible to provide the populations, which are deprived of them, five essential services which they desire: roads, potable water, electricity, dispensaries, and schools, to say nothing of administrative services, like justice, or social services which the present scattered housing makes impossible to establish.

Intense building activity will spring up around these villages, and experience which can only be conclusive will thereby be enhanced.

It is therefore a question of a comprehensive housing policy which must be maintained and developed through new steps, particularly a Housing Charter, for the year 2000. The 40 million Moroccans who we will comprise should then possess 5 million more housing units than today, but one may rest assured that the necessary efforts, thanks to the example given by His Majesty Hassan II, will receive increased impulse, for it must not be forgotten that Morocco, during the next 20 years, will undergo a change greater than we have yet known, in this Morocco in which, let no one doubt it, everyone will live happily.

6108

CSO: 4400

ANNOUNCED BENEFITS MUST NOT BE NEGATED BY PRICE INCREASES

Casablanca AL-BAYANE in French 3 Sep 80 p 1

(Editorial)

[Excerpts] The latest council of ministers has announced the adoption of two important social measures.

These are the approval of a proposed decree-law concerning a one-third reduction in rent for people whose income does not exceed 1,500 dirhams, and the decision to provide, in the year ahead, a wage increase for minor functionaries.

There is no denying the social value and the import, in these critical times, so difficult for the popular masses, of these two measures.

Indeed one can ask oneself, legitimately, about their [prospects for] development and implementation, especially with regard to the decision to proceed to the one-third reduction in rents. Right here and now, in fact, it certainly appears that putting into practice such a measure will run into many stumbling blocks and a number of obstacles, none going so far as to predict that it could backfire against the very persons supposed to benefit from it...

But if one credits certain persistent rumors, these measures [illegible] emptied of any practical import, since an official price increase for basic necessities is in preparation.

In sum, the social policy of the government would [then] be like PENELOPE'S TAPESTRY: What's given with the one hand is taken back with the other!

Now what about those rumors?

Is it true that the government is getting ready to eliminate state aid, which takes the form of subsidies to the Compensation Fund, on indispensable products such as tea, sugar, oil, flour?

in this case such increases--which certain speculators have already anticipated--would plainly and simply annul the effects of the above-cited measures.

This is why we, for our part, consider it absolutely essential not to abandon the subsidies for basic necessities.

The people, for their part, bear the brunt of the crisis. It would be logical and just to preserve their purchasing power--already so limited--and to go get the money from where it can be found--through the tactic of an authentic tax reform such as it proposed by the PPS [Party of Progress and Socialism].

9516

CSO: 4400

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT SPENDING REVIEWED

Casablanca LA VIE ECONOMIQUE in French 29 Aug 80 p 5

[Text] A total of 1.76 billion dirhams is now reserved for the program financed by the special fund for regional development, in the framework of the 1978-1980 Triennial Plan. It is primarily made up of 1977 appropriations recycled for 1978. These appropriations were held with the aim of completing operations begun during the 1973-1977 5-year plan.

Several projects were thus effectively completed in the various provinces of the kingdom in the course of the years 1978 and 1979. Nevertheless, achievements could have been greater without the budgetary restrictions imposed at the national level which affected all sectors and types of projects. FSDR [Special Fund for Regional Development] disbursements thus experienced a mild decline in 1978 by comparison with the year 1977 (428 million dirhams against 452 million dirhams) and may well be weak in 1979 (164 million dirhams up to the end of October).

The main sectors concerned are: basic economic infrastructure as well as social and administrative equipment.

The geographic distribution of expenditures in 1978 shows that close to 30 percent went to the southern region including the Recovered Saharian Provinces.

The problems which have hindered completion of FSDR projects have had negative effects mainly on promotion of small and medium-sized businesses which are in general the main market principals involved in execution of these projects.

In the future this important aspect of the problem will be taken into account. Similarly, taking into account project locations in decisions on restriction of credits would allow for alleviation of pressures which could affect employment in the least advantaged regions.

The Development Fund for Local Communities (FDCL)

Credits reserved for the financing of these items was increased to more than 1 billion dirhams. The size of the appropriations to the local communities with respect to their equipage denotes the concern of the government to accompany the transfer of new powers to the communal councils with concomitant resources, especially financial, in order to give concrete content to the policy of decentralization.

The distribution of these credits by year and by region is as follows:

Régions	1978	1979	1980	TOTAL
1) Le Sud	8 648	85 000	60 000	153 648
2) Le Tensift	6 487	30 000	70 000	106 487
3) Le Centre	28 182	65 000	130 000	323 182
4) Le Nord-Ouest	20 600	60 000	100 000	180 600
5) Le Centre-Nord	9 000	20 000	60 000	89 000
6) L'Oriental	12 250	20 000	40 000	72 250
7) Le Centre-Sud	4 950	10 000	40 000	54 950
8) Toutes régions	94728	380 000	480 000	854 728
9) Opérations d'intérêt commun ou crédits à transférer par les ministères	5 252	178 300	110 000	393 552
Total	100 000	398 300	600 000	1098 300

Key:

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| 1. South | 6. East |
| 2. Tensift | 7. Center South |
| 3. Center | 8. All regions |
| 4. Northwest | 9. Operations of common interest or ministry transfer credits |
| 5. Central North | |

These investments are aimed at the building of community infrastructure, specifically: sanitation, potable water, rural electrification, urban transport, urban electrical distribution, urban and rural improvements, personnel training in the local communities, specialized buildings, local road conditions, and some social infrastructure.

Beyond the social end of these subsidies given by the state, they are part of the vaster framework of the strengthening of the process of decentralization.

Decentralization

The first two years of the Triennial Plan were devoted to effectively putting into operation certain major aspects of the organic law of the local communities which gave the communal councils more extensive powers especially in the economic and social domains.

This is why in light of decentralization the FDCL has been given sizable credits like those mentioned above.

These credits have allowed the municipalities to undertake, by themselves, the realization of several projects of a local nature, and it has also allowed the autonomous centers and the rural communes to launch their infrastructure programs under the responsibility of the governor, who, in this case, has been given secondary authority over the credits.

9516

CSO: 4400

BANKS CONSORTIUM LOANS \$250 MILLION

Casablanca MAROC SOIR in French 27 Aug 80 pp 1, 2

[Text] Paris, 27 August, (MAP)--Mr Abdelkamel Rerhaye, minister of finance, signed on Tuesday in Paris a loan agreement for \$250 million granted to Morocco by a consortium of international banks.

This loan, said the kingdom's embassy in Paris, will be used to finance economic and social development projects, especially in agriculture, fishing, and energy research.

The consortium which granted this loan includes many Arab, European, and American banks, particularly the Union of Arab and French Banks, the Abu Dhabi Investment Company, the National Bank of Paris, Barclays International Group, Citicorp International Group, and the Commerzbank AG.

The signing ceremony took place in the presence of the close collaborators of Mr Rerhaye and several personalities of Paris financial circles who did not fail to stress that this loan is testimony to the confidence which the international financial organs place in the Kingdom of Morocco.

Thus Dr Mohamed Aboushadi, president of the Union of French Arab Banks (UBAF), said that this loan was favorably received by international financial circles because of the good management of the Moroccan economy and economic achievements in various sectors despite a difficult international situation.

Likewise the president of the UBAF praised the politico-economic system of the Kingdom of Morocco, which was characterized by "the application of liberal economic structures which have largely proved themselves."

In conclusion Mr Aboushadi expressed his confidence in the future of economic development in Morocco and his eagerness for the attainment of the goals of the future Moroccan 5-year-plan.

Replying to Mr Aboushadi, Mr Abdelkamel Rerhaye, minister of finance stated in particular that: "This loan is the best testimony of the interest and confidence which international financial circles still have in my country, and the culmination of this operation is for us both a stimulus and an object of satisfaction.

"The results of the efforts exerted during the past 3 years are considerable in several respects, and particularly in 1980, which will show a growth rate of 6.3 percent. In the same year our exports will increase by 36 percent, which will make possible the reduction of the deficit in external accounts by 20 percent compared with 1979. In addition, the increase in private investment observed this year shows that the encouragements inaugurated by the authorities, particularly in the sectors of fisheries and small and medium enterprise, has begun to produce fruits."

"We are therefore in a position," adds Mr Rerhaye, "to enter into the new 5-year period with more calm and confidence in our possibilities of pursuing economic and social development and adapting our economy to the deep changes which have taken place on the international economic scene."

Furthermore, Mr Abdelkami Rerhaye declared that "one of the basic priorities of the future 5-year plan will be to increase national production, especially in agriculture, so as to insure a maximum coverage of the needs of the country for food products and to develop further our exports of agricultural products. Similarly, deep sea fishing, which contains great potentials which are insufficiently exploited, will benefit from our entire attention in order to develop and modernize it."

"In the field of energy," said Mr Rerhaye, "we are counting on implementing a program focused on the mobilization of national resources and on the rationalization of energy consumption. Stress will be placed on the search for petroleum, on the exploitation of oil shale, and on the completion of hydraulic equipment."

"With regard to industry, the next 5-year plan will favor the development of the sectors oriented toward exploitation and the industries substituting for imports, and it will especially provide a choice place for small and medium-sized industries which create many jobs."

"Parallel with these actions," added Mr Rerhaye, "we will continue to devote all necessary attention to internal and external balances so that they will not jeopardize the pursuit of progress."

"In this picture the development of our exports will be a favored tool for facing up to the pressures on the level of our balance of payments, pressures will result necessarily from our effort to acquire equipment. To this end the programs to develop and make profitable our main mineral resource, namely the phosphates, will be accentuated. Likewise the range of our export products will be diversified to the extent possible and a greater competitiveness of our products will be sought."

"On the level of internal accounts we have already undertaken a program of eliminating waste from our public finance, and we will take other measures designed especially to encourage national saving."

"This whole policy which we plan to follow during the coming 5-year period, the main lines of which I have traced for you," said Mr Rerhaye again, "enjoys the support of international financial institutions like the IMF and the World Bank."

"Actually, on the basis of programs agreed with these two institutions and which are being included in the framework of our future 5-year plan, these institutions will grant to Morocco during the next 3 years substantial financial contributions which will fill out our own means of financing and help us to make the necessary adjustments."

In conclusion Mr Rerhaye emphasized that the coming 5-year period "will be a period of profound change for the Moroccan economy." "We are firmly convinced," added the minister, "that we are capable of overcoming our difficulties rapidly and increasing our efforts for socioeconomic development."

6108

CSO: 4400

'AL-BAYANE': THOUSANDS LAID OFF IN CASABLANCA METAL INDUSTRIES

Casablanca AL-BAYANE in French 3 Sep 80 pp 1, 3

[Article]

[Text] The crisis is spreading, factories are shutting down. Thus, the metal industry in Casablanca (economic capital of the country) is more troubled than ever. In fact, the various production units in the sector are closing one after the other. This disturbing situation is going to get worse, since nothing has been decided on by officials, whereas increasing numbers of workers are finding themselves deprived of any source of income and work.

The social tragedy is widespread, as whole families are being condemned to loss and calamity.

We publish below a dramatic list of the factories which have closed their doors and sent their workers home:

THE RENNI WORKSHOPS:

The factory shut down on 1 September--40 workers laid off.

CIMM: [expansion unknown]

This establishment ceased operations on 25 August 1980, that is at a time when the annual leave of 20 workers had expired.

SECOMAC: [expansion unknown]

25 workers unemployed since 25 August 1980.

AFRICAL: [expansion unknown]

This establishment has been shut down since 18 August 1980. As a result, 35 workers are unemployed.

GROSSO:

The 250 workers at this establishment have been without jobs for some time. They continue to stay on site.

CARROSSERIE MARTINEZ: [Auto assembly]

The workers have been living under the gun since the unit was Moroccanized. In the end, the new manager decided to lay off all the personnel. And it is a tragedy for the many families that depended on the factory...

SHIPYARDS:

This enterprise has been closed for more than 2 months, with the authorization of the public authorities. About a hundred workers are unemployed.

CARROSSERIE BAHRI: [Auto assembly]

In this factory the workers are on strike; as for the management, it considers that the employees are already laid off: about 30.

MACONAVAL:

This factory has been on strike since 1 July 1980. It has 130 workers. Management rejects any rehiring of the 10 discharged workers.

SOMATIC:

Here too the "bankruptcy of society," 65 men without jobs since the beginning of summer.

For its part, SOMACA remains on strike, while the decision has been made to lay off 300 workers in this big automobile assembly plant.

This list, which is not exhaustive, expresses in a sadly eloquent way the scope of the crisis which the metal industry sector is experiencing, and the extent of unemployment which is hitting thousands of people: the laid-off workers and their families.

In the face of this situation it becomes urgent for the authorities to respond by preventing the lay-offs which are proceeding in tandem with the flight of capital.

For its part, the Casablanca working class will not sit with arms folded before this liquidation scheme.

9516

CSO: 4400

INDUSTRIALIZATION POLICY, MOROCCANIZATION DISCUSSED

Casablanca MAROC SOIR in French 9 Sep 80 p 4

[Interview of Mohammed Belkhayat by MACHREB-ARABE PRESSE]

[Text] 'What characterizes Moroccan industrial policy is its opening up of foreign commerce' stated Mohammed Belkhayat, head of the Office of Industrial Development.

In an interview granted to the agency MACHREB-ARABE PRESSE, in connection with the meeting on promotion of industrial investments in Morocco, which was held at Rabat, Mr. Belkhayat pointed out that Morocco has developed a firm and precise industrial strategy based on the following:

1. Valorization of phosphates by expansion of the Maroc-Chimie complex and establishment of Maroc-Phosphore, while other similar units are being planned.
2. Preparation and execution of a sugar plan which has enabled the construction of a dozen sugar mills and the production of two-thirds of the national consumption while expecting to satisfy all of the country's needs by the year 1990.
3. Activity in the cement and construction materials industry which made it possible to raise the production level to 4.5 million tons in 1979 whereas it amounted only to one million tons in 1960.
4. Development of the textile industry. In fact, Morocco, which in 1969 obtained nearly all of the textiles it required by importation, now meets all of its domestic requirements by production and exports approximately 800 million dirhams worth of these products.

In summary, domestic industry is meeting the requirements of the country with respect to everyday consumer products, it was pointed out by Mr. Belkhayat who nevertheless said that Morocco has contracted to produce intermediate products concerning the areas of mechanics, electronics, plastics and steel products.

The share of industrialization in the gross national product rose from 12 percent in 1912 to 18 percent in 1979, it was indicated by Mr. Belkhayat who added that the annual rate of increase of industrial exports has been 18 percent and that the number of industrial projects completed annually, which had been between 100 and 150 before 1972, is now between 600 and 650, which shows the enormous effort undertaken by the Moroccan government in the industrial field.

In answer to a question regarding the evaluation of the meeting for promotion of industrial investments in Morocco, Mr. Belkhayat emphasized the psychological impact of this forum which witnessed participation of more than 300 international firms comprising 32 different nations. This, he said, has permitted releasing the attention of the promoters and thus creating a climate of emulation which is favorable to the economic development of Morocco.

When asked about the role of the Office of Industrial Development with regard to small and medium business, Mr. Belkhayat referred to the creation within this office of a component charged with furnishing assistance and aid to those small and medium businesses which wish to receive it.

This component, which consists of a team of specialists and experts of the European Economic Commission, is charged with examining on the spot the problems of the small and medium businesses and to assist in solving them.

With regard to the present situation of small and medium businesses, industrial development has required that they adapt themselves easily to the situation and the government encourages this development.

Finally, in response to a question dealing with the development of Arab investments in Morocco, Mr. Belkhayat brought up the importance of Arab businessmen at this forum, which denotes the interest that they exhibit.

It should be pointed out that, during this meeting, he furnished the participants with a memorandum defining the regulation as well as the philosophy of Moroccanization.

The principle of Moroccanization was established by the decree of March 2, 1973. Operationally, it deals with the gradual taking over of the centers of economic decision by Moroccans so that efforts to expand the modern sector permit the beginning of growth.

Moroccanization constitutes participation rather than nationalization. It constitutes one of the phases of the Moroccan policy of economic development.

Thus, the Prime Minister was able to say during one of his statements on this subject: "We hope that Moroccanization will reveal, for any given sector, the preferred form of the association and that they take shape as far as possible by increases of capital connected with expansion of the sector."

Consequently, certain economic activities are reserved for individual and legal entities. The decree dealing with Moroccanization states the following: "Moroccan companies are defined as those which have their headquarters in Morocco and also satisfy one of the following criteria: (a) A corporation at least half of the capital of which belongs to Moroccan citizens. (b) Legal entities of a private nature, a majority of the members of the Board of Directors and the President of the Board being Moroccan citizens."

The economic activities concerned by the Moroccanization decree are determined by the application decree of May 8, 1973.

The economic activities appear on two lists. The non-Moroccan individual and legal entities carrying on one of these activities upon this date must conform to the provisions of the decree of March 2, 1973 no later than May 31, 1974 in the case of activities appearing on list number 1 and no later than May 31, 1975 in the case of activities appearing on list number 2. These lists may be obtained from the Ministry of Commerce.

As pointed out by the prime minister in one of the interviews dealing with Moroccanization, these lists are limiting in nature and concern the tertiary sector. Nevertheless, they concern those activities of a commercial nature such as assembling activities or those which are at a standstill and need to be put into motion.

In the case where a company conducts two distinct activities, one of which is covered by the decree and the other is not, the company should separate these activities, for example, by creating an affiliate which would be Moroccanized in accordance with the law or else should Moroccanize the entire company.

It should be pointed out that during the making of new foreign investments in Morocco, not only will financial participation be a great help, but also association with Moroccans will offer undeniable advantages by furnishing foreigners better knowledge of the local market, by furnishing them all contacts necessary with the Moroccan government and by providing them with facilities for obtaining raw materials, etc.

Recently, some businessmen (particularly Germans) expressed their regrets at not being able to find Moroccan partners or at finding Moroccan partners who possessed the desired qualifications but did not have sufficient capital.

In order to permit a large number of domestic businessmen (particularly those not possessing sufficient capital) to participate in Moroccanization operations, a Moroccanization fund was created by the government.

7619
CSO: 4400

GOVERNMENT TO SUBSIDIZE RESTORATION OF OLD CITRUS PLANTATIONS

Casablanca MAROC SOIR In French 10 Sep 80 p 6

[Interview with Ahmed Derrab by Mohammed M'rani Alaoui]

[Text] Tomorrow (Thursday), at 10 A.M., the Association of Citrus Growers of Morocco will hold its annual meeting at the Salle des Fetes. This meeting has been delayed somewhat due to an exceptional season (770,000 metric tons exported), particularly with respect to late crops.

In order to inform the readers of this sector of the domestic economy, MAROC SOIR conducted the following interview with Ahmed Derrab, Secretary General of the Association of Citrus Growers of Morocco.

MAROC SOIR: Mr. Derrab, can you tell me in a few words what is the status of domestic cultivation of citrus fruits?

AHMED DERRAB: At the present time, it covers an area of 70,000 hectares, beginning at Berkane on the east and extends to the Souss plains, passing through Gharb (including Larache), a narrow strip between Rabat and Casablanca and finally Beni Mellal and Marrakech.

Our country produces five varieties of citrus fruits, namely the 'noble variety' (that is, the clementine), navel, blood orange, early orange and late orange.

M.S.: The domestic industry of cultivation of citrus fruit is presently classified as small and medium business which makes it less competitive on the international market. What can be done to remedy this situation?

A.D.: It should first be mentioned that all of the plants are combined under FRUMAT where growers, the Marketing and Export Office and foreign customers each own approximately one-third of the capital.

We are pleased with the decision that has just been made by the government of His Majesty the King in this regard and which consists in authorizing the growers to own 50 percent of the capital.

This will permit better valorization of the domestic production which amounts to approximately one million metric tons and serves three principal clients, namely, exporting (70 percent), consumption by the domestic market of fresh fruit (20 percent) and processing plants (10 percent).

M.S.: Has this industry been reproached for favoring foreign markets and neglecting the domestic market?

A.D.: This unbalance constitutes one of the weaknesses of our sector and makes us directly dependent on foreign trade with its accompanying hazards. In order to avoid this situation, our association has seriously undertaken a policy of organizing the domestic market.

M.S.: What are the practical measures that have been taken in this regard?

A.D.: Our approach is two-pronged, the first one being to increase domestic consumption. It is absurd that this consumption is restricted to 9 or 10 kilograms per capita per year in our own country, where we grow the fruit, whereas in the non-producing countries, where the cost of this food amounts to 5 or 6 times that of the price in our country, the consumption reaches a value of 13 to 15 kilograms in the case of France and Germany and as high as 20 kilograms in Holland.

The second prong of our approach is 'moralization' of the citrus fruit industry since the consumers' price is, on the average, six times the production cost.

In practice, let us assume that an advertising campaign is conducted on radio, television and various organs of the domestic press.

With regard to price, we operate at the level of the processing plants through which 80 percent of our domestic production passes.

When it comes to sorting, we require that the quality of the product earmarked for consumption be better than that of the fruit to be crushed with minimum prices going to the grower. What we can't figure out is how to determine the price to the consumer.

M.S.: Are the distribution costs a constant problem in this business? Why doesn't this branch of the industry work for itself?

A.D.: The ideal solution would be for us to own the entire infrastructure and the equipment required for transportation, handling and processing of our product.

However, it happens that we have inherited part of this infrastructure (the processing plants already installed). We are not resting on our laurels. On the contrary, we have converted to a policy of integration which is aimed at having the growers own the processing plants so that they may handle their own harvests themselves.

This policy has already begun to be implemented. At the present time, 60 percent of the processing plants belong to the growers.

The small growers have not been neglected. The Marketing and Export Office has been requested (and has agreed) to build processing plants reserved for the small growers and run by the Marketing and Export Office for these growers.

I would like to mention that the Association has very recently completed the construction of a processing plant at Marrakech which will be operated by the Marrakech growers.

With regard to transportation, the National Transportation Office refuses to allow the growers to use their own vehicles to move their crops.

M.S.: Vehicles bearing the initials of the Association of the Citrus Growers of Morocco would guarantee to the National Transportation Office that the growers would not use such an authorization for several days during the year and the problem would be solved, wouldn't it?

A.D.: The Association of Citrus Growers of Morocco is a non-profit organization and cannot lend itself to any trafficking -- with the exception of Saudi Arabia.

M.S.: How can you explain the absence of Moroccan oranges in the Middle East and in the countries bordering the Persian Gulf?

A.D.: Exporting of citrus fruits depends on the Marketing and Export Office which holds the monopoly. Nevertheless, upon the request of the growers, the regulations governing the Marketing and Export Office have been revised in such a manner as to be able to participate with this office regarding exporting and sales. In this connection, the representatives of the Association of Citrus Growers of Morocco have seats on the Board of Directors of the Marketing and Export Office.

Similarly, officers and technicians of the Association of Citrus Growers of Morocco meet together with the Marketing and Export Office within commissions and technical committees, the most important of which is the Permanent Citrus Growers Committee which, on the one hand, combines the governing staff of the services concerned by the citrus growers with the Marketing and Export Office and, on the other hand, the members of the Board of Directors of the Association of Citrus Growers of Morocco.

For this purpose, delegations are sent to the principal foreign markets in order to conduct on-the-spot investigations of conditions of distribution and marketing of citrus fruits.

M.S.: During the 1979-1980 season, 1,037,000 metric tons of citrus fruits were grown while during the 1978-1979 season only 876,000 metric tons were produced. Can't the Association of Citrus Growers of Morocco do something to control the production levels which appear to be at the mercy of climatic conditions?

A.D.: Contrary to the case of industrial production, all agricultural production depends not only on production conditions but also on climatic conditions.

With regard to climatic conditions, nothing can be done about the *cher-gul* [Arab word for hot desert winds], hail, very heavy rains or the seasonal effect, where a tree that has a heavy yield one year will produce less the following year.

However, the area where we can exert some influence is that of production conditions, namely, irrigation, manure, fertilizers, and the use of trained technicians who are distributed among the citrus growing regions of Morocco. This is what we do.

M.S.: On July 30 at Police Headquarters, a meeting of the Board of Directors of the Marketing and Export Office, presided over by His Majesty the King, was held in connection with royal directives to be transmitted to the growers. The sovereign insisted upon returning to the concept of the orchard and upon increasing the areas devoted to citrus cultivation. What was done in this direction?

A.D.: With respect to this suggestion, the citrus profession proceeded to reconvert the varieties grown by removing the poor ones and replacing them with the best ones.

Furthermore, in order to encourage the replacement of old orchard plantations with new ones and, taking into account the exorbitant cost of a hectare of citrus fruits (33,000 dirhams from the first to the seventh year), the Association of Citrus Growers of Morocco requested aid and incentives for the growers.

The government has just answered our appeal by granting a subsidy of 3500 dirhams per hectare for five years with a deferred amortization of five years at a preferential interest rate.

As for an increase of area devoted to citrus growing, the rate of new planting set for the five-year plan (1981 to 1985) has been set at 1500 to 2000 hectares per year.

What most delighted the members of the citrus growing profession was the fact that the incentives granted by the government be allotted to the growers as soon as possible.

EXPORTS for 1979-1980 = 770,000 metric tons (Value = 160 billion centimes) as compared with exports for 1978-1979 of 543,000 metric tons (Value = 116 billion centimes)

<u>COUNTRY</u>	<u>No. of metric tons</u>
France	213,000
West Germany	141,000
Other member nations of the European Economic Community	63,700
Great Britain	30,400
Scandinavia	44,200
Other West European nations	3,200
Total for Western Europe	496,300
Soviet Union	194,300
Poland	20,600
Saudi Arabia	47,700
Canada	6,300
Other nations	3,000
Total for nations other than Western Europe	273,700
World total	770,000

Production of citrus fruits by variety and season

<u>VARIETIES</u>	<u>1979-1980 season</u>	<u>1978-1979 season</u>
Clementines	267,000	232,000
Navels	216,000	200,000
Blood oranges	78,000	68,000
Salustianas	13,000	13,000
Early oranges	18,000	23,000
Late oranges	432,000	326,000
Miscellaneous citrus fruits	12,500	14,000

Total production - 1980 season = 1,037,000 metric tons

Total production for 1979 season = 876,000 metric tons

7619

CSO: 4400

ON ORIENTAL REGION INDUSTRIAL, AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

Casablanca MAROC SOIR in French 13-14 Sep 80 p 2

[Text] The economic Oriental region which consists of the provinces of Oujda, Nador and Figuig and which covers a total area of 82,820 square kilometers, constitutes a coherent and complementary ensemble possessing large scale basic infrastructures and equipment.

The port of Nador-Beni Ansar, which can receive ore ships displacing 60,000 metric tons, will bring new blood to the Oriental region and its Mediterranean coast, will confirm its vocation and will favor its opening to Europe, the Mediterranean countries and the Middle East.

In addition to its political impact, the port of Nador-Beni Ansar, the first phase of which was constructed at a cost of 145 million dirhams, will permit saving time and money with regard to import and export operations. For a long time, the Oriental region has been supplied from Casablanca although it is located at a distance of a few hundred kilometers by ship from Europe.

Another port which is smaller than that of Nador is now being constructed at Ras Kebdana (pleasure boat and fishing boat port) and, in the future, we expect to see port installations extending along the coast from Nador to Saidia.

Moreover, construction of the steel complex at Nador at a cost of 1,000 billion centimes, probably motivates construction of the port of Nador, as well as establishment of the railway link between Nador and Taourirt. The first Moroccan steel plant will be completed at Nador, near the iron mine which the Spaniards began to operate more than seventy years ago.

The steel and chemical complex, as was predicted some time ago by Moussa Saadi, Minister of Energy and Mines, will have a leading effect on the entire region. Several industrial plants will be established at Nador as well as at Taourirt, Oujda and Berkane (pharmaceutical and plastics industry and possibly mechanical and automobile construction).

One of the measures that is forecast by officials is the establishment of industrial zones at Oujda, Nador, Taourirt and Berkane, probably in anticipation of the industrial development that will occur in the region in the future but also to satisfy the demands formulated by the industrial enterprises and corporations.

The economic Oriental region also includes a sugar mill and a cement plant. The former uses cane and sugar beets whose cultivation was undertaken on a large scale along the irrigated perimeter of Zaio (site of the sugar mill) and Berkane. As for the cement plant, inaugurated two months ago by Azeddine Guessous, Minister of Commerce, Industry, Merchant Marine and Maritime Fishing, it satisfies all the needs of the region and sometimes sells merchandise to Casablanca, Fes and Melilla.

Establishment of a port, a steel and chemical complex, a cement plant (the first of its type in Africa), a sugar mill, a railway link between Taourirt and Nador and other valuable large scale projects will be of extreme importance to the development of the oriental region.

It should also be stated that the oriental region includes the largest thermal station of the kingdom of Morocco which is located at Jerada, near the coal bed of this town, which is considered to be the second ranking labor center of the kingdom after Khouribga and Youssoufia, and employs approximately 6,000 workers in the mining of coal.

In fact, the oriental region harbors large ore reserves of iron (Nador), lead (Oued El Himer), anthracite (Jerada), iron (Ouixan), zinc (Bouberker), manganese (Bouarfa), copper (Jbel Klakh) and Fuller's earth (Nador) which are presently being exploited.

Indeed, it appears that industrialization of this region carries top priority due to the fact that the subsoil is very rich in minerals and that both climatic conditions and the nature of the soil are often not very favorable to the pursuit of agriculture.

Nevertheless, agriculture has not been completely neglected. The first dam to be constructed in independent Morocco was the Mohammed V dam followed by the Mechra Hammadi dam which irrigates nearly 60,000 hectares. The regions of Berkane and Zaio, which are under the jurisdiction of the Moulouya regional office of Agricultural Development, is rich and prosperous. A variety of crops including citrus fruits and legumes are grown here.

Nevertheless, although the search for water in the southern portion of this region is being conducted, it appears to be absolutely necessary to intensify prospection operations for water and to undertake irrigation of the great plains of Naïma, Tafrata and Dahra.

Irrigation of these plains, which extend over tens of hectares, will contribute not only to regional and national prosperity but also to conservation of the soil, to moderation of climate and to social stabilization. It is true that it will be necessary to construct a dam over the Za wadi and to irrigate the 8500 hectare Garet plain, beginning at Moulouya, but it will be necessary to step up the pace of work so as to keep the population where it is now and to avoid any exodus such as those which particularly affected the inhabitants of the southern region in recent years following the occurrence of droughts. Water is also of vital importance for animals. In this connection, it should be kept in mind that the livestock of the Oriental region numbers approximately 3 million heads.

Furthermore, construction of modern roads and repair of old ones is more necessary than ever before. Development of domestic and foreign tourism depends on this to a great extent. Several inhabitants of other provinces of Morocco would like to visit this region but are afraid of the dangers of the road which is either narrow or impassable at certain places. A modern road which furnishes easy access to the region, which is relatively mountainous, is indispensable. It will also be necessary to think about the construction of roads leading to tourist sites, to beach resorts, summer resorts, and spas such as Zegzel, Debdou, Sidi Chafi (Goutitir), Tafogalt, Ben Kachour and about the creation of new links so as to permit direct access and reduce travel time.

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BRIEFS

ARREST OF AUTO WORKERS--While the strike of the workers of the SOMACA is about to enter its fourth month, the workers continue to be victims of arbitrary measures. On the 25th of this month, for example, four SOMACA workers were arrested, namely Ajemaane Mohamed Majid, Belasri Mohamed, El Betti Abdellah and Lansar Lefkih. These unjust arrests occurred at a time when discontent among the workers reached a high point. They thus confirm the arbitrary behavior of a management which imposes its views on officials who refuse to intervene in a positive way and prefer a worsening of the situation while labor legislation in effect is violated and the most elementary rights of the workers are flouted. This is what we have confirmed throughout the strike which the workers began last 3 June. The immediate and unconditional freeing of the workers should occur without delay. This would be a just measure which the authorities should take on an urgent basis. This is what AL BAYANE demands, in solidarity with the workers of SOMACA. [Excerpts] [Casablanca AL BAYANE in French 26 Aug 80 p 1] 6108

SARDINES FOR NIGERIA -- A total of 600,000 cartons of sardines canned in vegetable oil were delivered to Nigeria during 1980. This large contract which was signed by the Moroccan Marketing and Export Office and by Nigeria, constitutes nearly thirty percent of Morocco's exports of canned sardines, which amount to 2.2 million cartons per year (average of the last five seasons), and more than 80 percent of our sales of canned sardines to African markets, the average being 720,000 cartons per season. Moreover, this contract covers 23 percent of the planned exports of sardines for the 1979-1980 season, its total value amounting to 59,275,000 dirhams. [Text] [Casablanca MAROC SOIR in French 13-14 Sep 80 p 1] 7619

CSO: 4400

TUNISIA

INTERNAL CHANGES SEEN AS ENCOURAGING

Casablanca AL BAYANE in French 9 Aug p 1

[Text] Something new is now appearing in Tunisia, and in a discreet but genuine way one has the firm impression that the political climate is changing, for the better, moreover.

When Mohamed M'Zali was named prime minister, some hoped that the situation, which had been fixed and immobile for a number of years, was going to change. This prediction was based on the confirmation that the Tunisian regime was being carried along by a new reality, particularly characterized by popular desire, expressed in various channels, to modify drastically the political status-quo.

This is actually what is happening. The trend of thinking outside the single party in power is increasingly enjoying a certain organizational latitude and right of expression.

Thus the "social-democrats," represented partly by former minister Ahmed Mestiri and his friends, have obtained authorization to publish two dailies, one in Arabic, the other in French.

More significant and highly positive is the fact that Tunisian political prisoners, members of organizations like "Al Amil Tounoussi," or "The Perspectivists," the trade unionists loyal to Habib Achour, and others, have been freed. This measure of clemency is a sure sign of a timid but positive evolution of the Tunisian regime, marked by the omnipresence and omnipotence of the Destourian Socialist Party.

The fact that Mr Masmoudi, the former minister may finally emerge from house arrest and that an opposition faction is now forming within the PSD [Destourian Socialist Party] itself, testifies to the fact that Tunisia is progressing toward democratization, ardently demanded by the people's masses on various occasions and in diverse ways.

The revival of the UGTT [Tunisian General Federation of Labor] which had been transformed into a tail appendage of the authorities after the dramatic

events of January 1978, the launching of the process of democratization, and a certain opening up of power.

All this is worth emphasizing and assessing at its true value. The Moroccan people, attentive to Maghreb questions, can only encourage such a development especially since it is true that the situation in Tunisia was explosive due to the immobilism of the authorities in power.

The bloody events of Gafsa, the result of an adventurist and completely mistaken vision of a group manipulated from abroad arrived to act as the tocsin. The ruling political class understood that the alert had been a warm one, even though the commandos who attacked this workers' city received no support from the population.

The absence of democracy, repression of progressive organizations, internal struggles within the "elites" heading the country, on a background of a serious economic and social crisis are the objective factors which enabled some people to attempt their blameworthy operations against Tunisia. They failed, and one can say that in a certain sense they marked the beginning of a change which is being confirmed at the present time.

In this connection one must note and regret that the Tunisian authorities failed to show itself to be equal to its responsibilities by ordering the execution of death sentences pronounced upon members of this group of young fanatics manipulated by a neighboring state.

It seems to us that clemency would have been preferable, for the failure of this adventure had been total and complete, the Tunisian members of the commando being no more than blind and deluded simple tools.

This being the case it is important for the good of Tunisia, for its future, and in conformity with the aspirations of the brotherly people, to deepen this process, to expand and pursue it.

In this sense one thing is crucial. This is the lifting of the unjust ban which has affected the Tunisian Communist Party since 1963, a vanguard, patriotic and responsible revolutionary organization. This step, as well as the authorization of the publication of the Tunisian Communist press would confirm the desire for an opening and democratization on the part of the government of Mr M'Zali.

Morocco itself is following a path which bears many similarities with that followed in Tunisia. One can even note that it is the first to have embarked upon it in the region, but one must perfect it, pursue it in a serious spirit and with an opening of the mind.

In this sense the freeing of the remainder of the political prisoners in Morocco is necessary, since it is true that a process should always be completed.

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Debbie